
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF PLANNING TO ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL
HOUSING TASK FORCE TO STUDY EXISTING COUNTY AND STATE LAWS,
RULES, AND PROCESSES TO PLAN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ON-
FARM EMPLOYEE HOUSING WITHIN THE STATE AGRICULTURAL
DISTRICT.

1 WHEREAS, the State has the duty to conserve and protect
2 agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase
3 agricultural self-sufficiency, and assure the availability of
4 agriculturally suitable lands; and

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6 WHEREAS, the State has made sustainability and self-
7 sufficiency in agriculture and local food production a priority;
8 and

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10 WHEREAS, economically safe, sanitary, and affordable
11 on-farm employee housing is critical for working farms to
12 attract and retain long-term and short-term farm workers; and

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14 WHEREAS, existing laws governing construction of such
15 on-farm employee housing are multi-layered and vary across the
16 State; and

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18 WHEREAS, many of the laws and rules governing construction
19 of traditional residential housing units are ill-suited for the
20 demands and economic realities of working farms; and

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22 WHEREAS, these existing laws, rules, and processes preclude
23 farms from providing safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm
24 employee housing to attract and retain farm workers, and stand
25 as an obstacle to the State's agricultural self-sufficiency; and

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27 WHEREAS, the Legislature supports the intent of the
28 existing laws to prevent use of agricultural lands for primarily
29 residential use or creation of "gentlemen estates" or "fake



1 farms", and recognizes that supporting housing for actual farm
2 workers on farms producing commercial agricultural products must
3 be tailored for that purpose; now, therefore,

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5 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
6 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, the House of
7 Representatives concurring, that the Office of Planning is
8 requested to establish an agricultural housing task force to
9 analyze and provide recommendations that would support existing
10 laws, rules, and processes to plan for the construction of safe,
11 sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing within the
12 state agricultural district limited to farms that are engaged in
13 agricultural production; and

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15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the agricultural housing task
16 force is requested to have the following objectives:

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18 (1) Study existing county and state laws, rules, and
19 processes for the construction of employee housing on
20 working farms within the state agricultural district
21 across the State;
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23 (2) Identify existing barriers in laws, rules, and
24 processes that prohibit the construction of safe,
25 sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing for
26 farmworkers, including mobile units for temporary and
27 seasonal farmworkers;
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29 (3) Give special consideration to modular, portable, and
30 temporary employee housing, which can be removed in
31 the event a farm ceases commercial production, as a
32 solution;
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34 (4) Create a separate legal designation, as it relates to
35 such housing without a permanent foundation;
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37 (5) Make recommendations for changes to existing state and
38 county laws, rules, and processes as necessary; and
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40 (6) Propose one master use application process, as well as
41 laws and rules that can be applied consistently
42 throughout the State, to issue a discretionary permit



1 for the construction of safe, sanitary, and affordable
2 on-farm employee housing for farmworkers on active
3 commercial farms, including permit conditions intended
4 to promote agricultural production and restrict
5 residential uses that are not serving primary
6 commercial agricultural purposes; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the agricultural housing task
9 force is requested to consist of the following:

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11 (1) The Director of the Office of Planning or the
12 Director's designee, who is requested to serve as
13 chairperson;
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15 (2) The Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture or the
16 Chairperson's designee;
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18 (3) The Deputy Director of the Department of Health's
19 Environmental Health Administration or the Deputy
20 Director's designee;
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22 (4) The Chairperson of the Land Use Commission or the
23 Chairperson's designee;
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25 (5) One representative member from each of the several
26 counties' zoning and planning departments;
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28 (6) Two representative members from an agricultural or
29 farming association, to be selected by the Director of
30 the Office of Planning; and
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32 (7) One representative member from a public interest
33 organization with a focus on housing issues, to be
34 selected by the Director of the Office of Planning;
35 and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the agricultural housing task
38 force is requested to:

- 39
40 (1) Submit a preliminary report of its findings and
41 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,
42 to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to



1 the convening of the Regular Session of 2021,
2 including a discussion of the task force's objectives;
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- 4 (2) Prepare and submit to the Legislature a draft guide
5 explaining the existing process for, and the laws and
6 rules relating to, approval of employee housing in the
7 state agricultural district across the State,
8 including county and local ordinances that pertain to
9 each locality for the public's understanding and
10 benefit, no later than twenty days prior to the
11 convening of the Regular Session of 2022; and
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- 13 (3) Submit a final report of its findings and
14 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,
15 to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to
16 the convening of the Regular Session of 2025; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Planning is
19 requested to provide administrative and clerical support to the
20 agricultural housing task force; and
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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
23 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the
24 Office of Planning; Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture;
25 Deputy Director of the Department of Health's Environmental
26 Health Administration; Chairperson of the Land Use Commission;
27 and mayors of the several counties.
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